

CONSUMER AWARENESS WEEK, SEPT. 8-12, 2003

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BE A SMART CONSUMER

NASHVILLE, TENN. – Tennessee's Consumer Affairs Division has handled thousands of calls from Tennesseans who've been the victims of scam artists. From those calls, our consumer experts have put together some simple tips to help consumers avoid being taken:

- Know who you're dealing with - always be cautious of an offer or solicitation from someone you don't know.
- If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Never give your financial or personal information to callers.
- Never pay in advance to win a "prize."
- Never send cash. Scams often request cash or money orders since they cannot be canceled or traced once they are sent.

Be wary if...

- A sales person is very excited, or is urging you to make a decision or commitment right away.
- The person calling you claims to be of high status, such as a president, CEO or an attorney.
- The person calling you tries to become too familiar or asks too many personal questions.
- The person tries to discourage you from researching his offer, his business, credentials or references.

Consumer scams are rampant and the best way to avoid them is to do your own thorough research before acting on anything that may seem suspicious, or that promises a great ``deal''.

If you have questions or concerns, the Tennessee Division of Consumer Affairs is here to offer help and guidance. You can contact the division at (615) 741-4737 or call toll free at 1-800-342-8385.